

City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority

October 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: The Ionia Downtown Development Authority meeting was called to order at 8:07AM by Chairperson Mike Kirgis.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS: Roll call revealed the following DDA Board of Directors present: Dave Cook, Margot Cook, Tim Hemenway, Mike Kirgis, John Krueger, and Director Linda Curtis. Guests included City Manager Jason Eppler, City Finance Director Chris Hyzer, Theatre Manager Gary Ferguson, and City Clerk Ally Cook.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to approve by Member Dave Cook; seconded by Member Margot Cook.
MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes from the DDA meeting of September 16, 2020. Motion to approve by Member Dave Cook; seconded by Member Hemenway.
MOTION CARRIED.

DDA accounts payable for August 26, 2020 – September 25, 2020 in the amount of \$13,087.57.

Theatre accounts payable for August 26, 2020 – September 25th in the amount of \$12,265.34.

City Finance Director Chris Hyzer reported budget adjustments for both the DDA and Theatre were approved following review of all accounts. Decrease in DDA expenses due to cancelation of the 2020 fireworks – a savings of \$12,000 and to \$6,000 contractual agreement (deposit) payment to MelRose Pyrotechnics for the 2021 Fireworks Display. The remaining balance of \$6,000 will not be made until the new FY2021/2022 budget. Theatre adjustments in both revenue and expenses respectively due to ticket and concession sales.

Motion to approve by Member Hemenway; seconded by Member Margot Cook.
MOTION CARRIED.

DDA Director Report: Included in DDA Board of Directors meeting document package.

THEATRE REPORT: Theatre Manager Gary Ferguson reported the Theatre opened this week. Patrons, volunteers and paid staff followed COVID health guidelines resulting in a smooth soft opening. The Point Of Sales RTS system automatically blocks seats surrounding paid seating sites meeting social distancing regulations. Bookings continue to be difficult due to seasonal scheduling and also lack of availability of movies. A full review of revenue / expenses will be conducted with decision on whether justification is met keeping the Theatre open at this time. Member Krueger noted that it is important to maintain regular movie presentations at this time to regain the customer base. City Manager Eppler noted the financial review will determine the feasibility of maintaining a regular schedule or remain opened at a reduced number of hours.

BOARD DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS:

1. 2021 DDA Board of Directors meeting schedule: Motion to approve by Member Dave Cook; seconded by Member Hemenway.
MOTION CARRIED.

- DISCUSSION ITEMS:
1. Resignation of Member Paton: Discussion included the need for member attendance to meet quorum each month. Mayor Balice has been notified of the Member Paton's resignation and will appoint a replacement in a timely manner. DDA Director Curtis noted that we currently do not have a restaurant representative or a Dexter Street Corridor member currently on the Board. With Member Dave Cook, Member Margo Cook and Member Krueger, the downtown business district is fully represented. Visitor Ally Cook provided comment on attendance and timelines for several DDA projects. City Manager Eppler noted a review of the board member makeup, meeting times / dates in addition to the DDA's purpose may be appropriate in the future.
 2. Christmas on the Bricks Campaign: DDA Director Curtis reviewed the purpose of the program noting that the final details / decision to move forward was dependent upon approval by the State of Michigan Charitable Gaming Division / Department. No promotion of the activities will be released pending license approval. Other options are being considered as a back-up plan.
 3. Autumn Celebration: DDA Director Curtis noted that area elementary schools were planning lawn / yard decorating competitions, virtual costume contests and pumpkin carving / decorating contests with a \$5 entry fee being charged as a fundraising campaign for their PTA/PTG groups. Out of respect to the groups using the holiday events as a fundraising opportunity, the Chamber of Commerce and DDA pulled the remaining activities. It was noted that the Chili Dawg Challenge is not and has never been a Chamber or DDA event. Independent Bank with collaboration from Bill Lynch started the festival 20 plus years ago. The Chamber of Commerce later provided added events creating Autumn Celebration. The DDA does not have a financial tie to the event and only assists as requested. Member Krueger noted that the cancellation of the remaining events or a full explanation was not provided to the public as hoped. Discussion relating to the DDA's role in all special events was noted.
 4. Ionia Farmers' Market: DDA Director Curtis met with Vendor Haight to discuss the future of the Market. It was noted that a committee will be formally created to review the proposal and make a decision on the future of the program. Ms. Haight would like to begin making plans as soon as possible once a final decision has been provided.

OTHER: Calendar of Events include: Ionia County Historical Society Spirits of the Past Cemetery Tour slated for Sunday, October 25th.

GENERAL ADJOURNMENT: Board discussions and comments continued until 9:18AM.
Motion to adjourn by Member Dave Cook, seconded by Member Margot Cook.
MOTION CARRIED.